



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300

November 18, 2005

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECTION 206 AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Description. Interested parties are hereby notified that the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Fort Worth District, has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) regarding the implementation of an aquatic ecosystem restoration project located along Olmos Creek in the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas.

Statutory Authority. This notice is being issued to all interested parties in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), and Engineering Regulation (ER) 200-2-2. This restoration project would be conducted under Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996, as amended (33 USC 2201).

Background. The project area includes a portion of Olmos Creek between San Pedro Avenue and Olmos Dam, including portions of Olmos Municipal Golf Course and Olmos Basin Park in San Antonio, Texas (map attached). The project is needed to restore aquatic and riparian habitats to a condition closer to natural, historic conditions. Prior to human encroachment, the floodplain along Olmos Creek was comprised of high quality riparian and in-stream habitat. However, the majority of the bottomland plant community along this portion of the creek has become highly disturbed and fragmented due primarily to conversion of land to recreational and urban uses, as well as the presence of a variety of invasive species. The quality of in-stream aquatic habitat has degraded due to alterations to natural water flows and channel morphology and removal of the riparian corridor along portions of the creek.

The purpose of the proposed action is to implement restoration measures that would remedy some of these degradations by restoring habitats within the project area, which includes the Olmos Municipal Golf Course and Olmos Basin Park. Specific degradations that need restoration include areas experiencing bank erosion, a narrow, fragmented riparian corridor, a lack of stream shade, and decreased plant species diversity, specifically hard mast producing trees. Lands would be made available by the City of San Antonio as the non-Federal sponsor. The City would also be responsible for all operation, maintenance, replacement, and repair costs.

Proposed Action.

The proposed action consists of the following measures within the Olmos Creek study area:

- Enhancement and restoration of approximately 73 acres of riparian corridor including invasive removal, bank vegetation, bottomland hardwood planting, and grass plantings within the riparian corridor.
- Bank stabilization measures including live willow staking and rip-rap to reduce erosion and improve approximately six acres of aquatic habitat.
- Enhancement of approximately 17 acres of native prairie through removal of invasive grass species and planting with native grasses.

Alternatives considered include the proposed action (recommended plan) and no action as described in the draft Planning Design Report (PDR) and integrated EA. Additional alternatives and scales were analyzed in the draft DPR/EA, but eliminated from further analysis either because project restoration objectives were not realized or the plans were not cost effective. Under the no action alternative, no restoration measures would be implemented. The lack of a well-developed riparian corridor and continuation of existing management practices would likely result in continued loss of riparian habitat, bank erosion, and sedimentation.

The proposed action would not have any significant impacts on the social, economic, or human and natural environment. No adverse impact on any species, which are proposed or listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, is expected. No significant historical, archeological, or hazardous waste concerns were identified within the project area. Contractors would be required to have erosion control and hazardous spill prevention plans in place, and would prepare a Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System plan and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. Vegetation and wetlands not proposed for restoration would be avoided during construction.

Public Meeting. A public meeting has not been scheduled for the proposed action. Prior to the close of the comment period, any person may make a written request for a public meeting, setting forth the particular reasons for the request. The District Engineer will then determine whether the issues raised are substantial and should be considered in his decision. If a public meeting is warranted, all known interested parties will be notified of the time, date, and location of such a meeting.

Public Review. Pursuant to the regulations implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended in 1975 (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Parts 1500 through 1508), the U.S. Department of the Army gives notice that it has prepared the required environmental documentation for the Olmos Creek Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Project in San Antonio, Texas. This document is available for review at the following addresses:

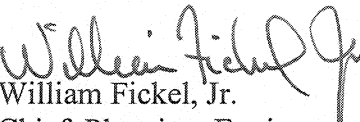
Central Public Library
600 Soledad
San Antonio, Texas 78212
(210) 207-2500

Branch Library
233 Bushnell
San Antonio, Texas 78212
(210) 732-8639

Kenwood Community Center
300 Dora
San Antonio, Texas 78212
(210) 732-1718

San Pedro Branch Library
1315 San Pedro Ave.
San Antonio, Texas 78205
(210) 733-1454

Comment Period. The comment period for this action is 30 days from the date of this Public Notice. Please address any comments to Mr. Michael Votaw, CESWF-PER-EE, Post Office Box 17300, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300, or by e-mail at Michael.Votaw@swf02.usace.army.mil. Copies of the EA and draft FONSI may be requested in writing at the above address, by telephone at (817) 886-1849, or visit the Fort Worth District website at www.swf.usace.army.mil.


William Fickel, Jr.
Chief, Planning, Environmental,
and Regulatory Division